

**Rockville Environment Commission**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, February 16, 2010**  
**At the Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue**

**Attendance**

**Commissioners:** Seth Adams, David Davis, Kris Dighe, Beri Kravitz, Christine Davidson-McCord, and Donna Vincent Roa

**Absent:** Steve Cardon, Dominique Lorang-Leins, Tolu Odunlami

**Guests:** John Britton, Rockville City Council Liaison  
Mark Charles, City of Rockville Environmental Management

**Meeting Commencement**

The meeting was convened at 7:39 pm.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the January 12, 2010 meetings were reviewed and unanimously approved by acclimation.

**Identifying Budget Priorities**

Commissioners discussed the need for identifying and prioritizing budget opportunities earlier in the City budgeting process. All Commissioners are to send current ideas to the Outreach Committee who will put the full list together and bring that back to the Commission at another meeting.

**Science Day Preparations**

Science Day is scheduled for **Sunday, April 25, 2010** at Montgomery College from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm. The Commission requested that Environmental Management prepare and submit the application form for space at Science Day [This has been completed]. The Commission has requested 2 tables worth of space.

The Commission space will be staffed on a rotating order for member participation: 11:00-1:45 (David and Steve); 1:30-3:45 (Seth and Beri); and 3:30-5:30 (Kris and Julie). Tolu indicated he would attend from 2:00 to 4:00. Commissioners will be wearing T-shirts with the City's environmental logo on them.

The Commission will have a new watershed model available as well as a rain barrel and energy demonstration materials. The Commission will be giving away switch plate insulators and an EPA ruler/magnifier. Finally, the Outreach Committee met with the City Public Information Officer regarding a proposed table-top display that was approved by the PIO. It has since been ordered and will be available in time for use at Science Day.

### **Earth Day**

The Commission briefly discussed potential award recipients that might be recognized as part of the City's 40 anniversary of Earth Day celebration. Written nominations will be forwarded to the Commission in the next week or so.

The Commission identified its April 13, 2010 meeting as the most desirable date to judge the 2010 Photo Contest entries.

### **Hometown Holidays**

Hometown Holidays is scheduled for May 29-30. The Commission intends to participate but will only require one display table. Further, the Commission anticipates only attending the Sunday (30<sup>th</sup>) session. *Recycling* will be the predominant theme. The Commission has also been asked to assist Recreation and Parks in identifying area green businesses to be invited to participate in the Green Expo portion of the event. Finally, the Outreach Committee is working with Recreation and Parks to line up speakers for a green program, including speakers from the Wild Bird Center, and experts on watersheds, rainscapes and conservation landscaping. Chair Dighe suggested that the Commission invite the organization "Rockville Living" to a future Commission meeting.

### **Committee Reports:**

*Sustainable Development and Energy Committee* – The Committee met and discussed the incremental costs associated with the green building ordinance. Ms. Davidson-McCord discussed a residential comparison study recently undertaken in the Frederick area that showed the additional cost of building the home green was nominal, and that those costs would be recovered in lower utility bills. It was also pointed out that the City has recently applied for a historic buildings grant that would be used to improve energy efficiency at 10 City historic homes. The Committee also discussed the desirability of pursuing an initiative to encourage City businesses to turn off some or all of their lighting when their establishments are closed.

Councilmember Britton encouraged the Commission to focus on the residential costs of the proposed ordinance. He also distributed three handouts (two from the Washington Board of Trade and one from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments) to Commissioners on energy efficiency opportunities. After a brief discussion, Commissioners were asked to forward any comments or questions they had to Mark Charles.

Finally, Mr. Charles discussed (and distributed a handout) research the Environmental Management Division had done on the likely response of lenders and insurers to the green building ordinance.

*Watershed Protection Committee* – At its January meeting, the Committee discussed the City's fats, oils and grease program and its illicit discharge program activities and the challenges facing the staff. The Committee members encouraged the City to begin routine salinity measurements in City waters.

The Committee is preparing an environmental excellence award nomination. The Committee also discussed how best to involve Boy and Girl Scout Troops in the water quality activities. The Committee also believes that more Rockville Reports articles should be written on water quality issues. The Committee would like to schedule a joint meeting with the Outreach Committee to pursue these initiatives.

*Outreach and Education Committee* – The Committee met and discussed a variety of potential approaches to outreach including:

- Developing a one page handout or magnet that describes unique recycling opportunities available to Rockville residents.
- A *Recycle Rewards* program for residents, possibly in partnership with the Chamber.
- A *Rockville Youth & Environment* program, possibly in partnership with Cable Channel 11. A specific written proposal is anticipated by March 9.
- Creating an Eco Calendar with daily energy tips and sustainability suggestions for the month of April (Earth Month).
- Planning a *Rockville Recycles* blog.
- Creating a dynamic Recycling PowerPoint, Jingle and U-Tube video.

The Outreach Committee launched a set of recycling messages on Facebook group pages to remind people to recycle waste from Superbowl Parties. Eight different messages were prepared. The action plan included sending twenty-one messages to 7 sites (3 messages per site) with a total potential audience for the set of messages at nearly 80,000 people. These messages also showed up on the Facebook "home page" of the person who sent the message, adding about a potential 3000 "reads" by people connected to the sender.

The Committee is interested in organizing community support for the Earth Hour, an event in March during which residents and businesses turn off all electrical devices (without causing a safety concern). Vehicles for bringing this to the resident's attention include Rockville Reports, Facebook and press releases.

Finally, Donna Roa announced that she had hired two part-time interns (University of Chicago students) who could be available after May 27 to pursue some tasks on behalf of the Commission.

#### **Environmental Management Report by Mark Charles**

- Mark announced that Amanda Matheny was resigning effective February 26, 2010. She will be working for an environmental consultant in Gaithersburg. The Commissioners are asked to forward names of professionals interested in interviewing for this position to Mr. Charles.
- A public hearing on the Green Building Chapter 5 Amendments is scheduled for the Mayor and Council Meeting on February 22, 2010. All Commissioners are invited to attend.

- A public hearing on the Stormwater Chapter 19 Amendments is scheduled for the Mayor and Council Meeting on March 8, 2010. All Commissioners are invited to attend.
- A Rainbarrel workshop is scheduled for March 27 at the Twinbrook Community Center.

#### **Filling a Commission Vacancy**

The Commission discussed filling the Commissioner vacancy created by the resignation of Dominique Lorang-Leins. Julie Carr was unanimously selected to fill that vacancy. Her name will be forwarded through the City Clerk to the Mayor for further consideration by the Mayor and Council. An appointment is likely to be scheduled for the March 1 Mayor and Council meeting.

#### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm by unanimous acclamation.

#### **Next Commission Meeting**

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 9, 2010 at 7:30 pm at Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland, 20850.**

#### **Post-Meeting Action Items:**

- Commissioners review the Board of Trade handouts distributed by Councilmember Britton.
- Mark will check on the possibility of providing Commissioners with City business cards.
- Mark will forward Julie Carr's name on to the City Clerk's office for appointment as a Commissioner.
- Mark will obtain copies of the FOG checklist and the frequently asked green building ordinance questions and forward them to Commissioners.
- David Davis will draft a short notice for Rockville Reports on Earth Hour.
- Environmental Management will forward several award nominees to Commissioners.
- Mark will arrange for the Sustainable Development and Energy Committee's name to appear correctly on the Commission's website.